



Charging and Remissions Policy

Date of document:	February 2024
Date for review:	February 2026
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Approval by:	Governing Body

Charging and Remissions Policy for School Excursions and Visiting Educational Groups

Purpose of Policy

We believe that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) independent of their parents' financial means. This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

Although there is no obligation for parents to pay for school excursions or for educationally enriching groups who visit the school, it is standard procedure to request a contribution on the understanding that if enough money isn't raised that the excursion may be cancelled.

The Governing Body recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances, therefore requests will be considered for financial support.

School charging

The school cannot and will not charge for the following:

- an admission application;
- education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent;

The school **can** charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them;
- optional extras (see page below);
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances
- certain early years provision;
- community facilities

Optional extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as 'optional extras'. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge **can** be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment.

Optional extras are:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not: a) part of the national curriculum; b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or c) part of religious education.
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority or governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education);
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit; extended day services offered to pupils (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).

In calculating the cost of optional extras an amount may be included in relation to:

- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra;
- The cost of buildings and accommodation;
- Non-teaching staff;
- Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Furthermore, in cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. Therefore, no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre- requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Voluntary contributions

The school is **allowed** by law to ask for or voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if any activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or the head teacher will make this clear to parents at the outset. The governing body or head teacher will **always** make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

No child will ever be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, or the school cannot fund it from some other source, then it will be cancelled. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal chance to take part in the activity concerned.

Music Tuition

Although the law states that, in general, all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to that rule.

The Charges for Music Tuition (England) set out the circumstances in which charges can be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, including vocal tuition. They allow charging for tuition in larger groups than was previously the case.

Accordingly, the school will charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, where the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent. Charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.

No charge will be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989).

Residential Trip in KS2

Our current procedure for informing parents about the Residential Trip and gauging interest is:

1. Summer Term: introductory letter to parents providing information and requesting deposit;
2. Autumn Term: further details setting out payment schedule and advising of information evening;
3. Spring Term: information Evening;
4. Late Spring Term: trip takes place.

Schools **will** charge for: board and lodging in the case of residential off-site visits, but the charge will never exceed the actual cost. When the school informs parents about a forthcoming visit, the head teacher will make it clear that parents who can prove they are in receipt of certain benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging. The list of benefits to which this applies can be found at the end of this policy document.

Families qualifying for remission or help with charges

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the governing body has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances. This Remissions Policy sets out the circumstances in which charges will be waived. Criteria for qualification for remission are given below:

Parents in receipt of –

- Income support
- Income based jobseekers allowance
- Support under part VI of the immigration and asylum act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, providing that working tax credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the sum given in the Revenue and Customs rules
- Guaranteed state pension

Additional categories of parents may claim help with some costs in some circumstances, which will be decided by the governing body taking into account as to whether additional help is justified.

Pupils in receipt of the Pupil Premium grant, or in receipt of the above benefits, may have their 'optional extras' reimbursed by the school.

General information and definitions

Education partly during school hours

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside school hours. However, a charge will only be made for the activity outside school hours if it is not part of the national curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school and not part of religious education.

Residential visits

If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50 per cent of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into 2 sessions. A 'half day' means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

Benefits

- income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get).